



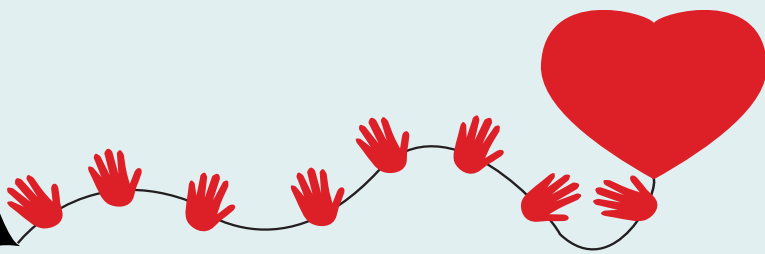
Maricopa County CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocate Program Newsletter

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September 2002



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UPCOMING EVENTS

September 19, 12 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. – Brown Bag Lunch with Juvenile Court Presiding Judge Linda Scott
Juvenile Court Complex – Durango, Juvenile Probation Administration Building, Room 474.

September 19-20 — AZ Minority Child & Family Network 20th Annual Cultural Diversity Conference: "Diversity 2002: Eliminating the Fear."
Hilton Phoenix/East/Mesa Pavilion, 1011 West Holmes Ave. Mesa, AZ 85210. Call for details: David Underwood, 520-578-0459.

September 20-21, 8 a.m.- 4 p.m. – Orientation Training for new volunteers
1501 W. Jefferson, AZ Supreme Court Building.

September 26, 6 p.m. – 9 p.m., Post Orientation Training
Juvenile Court Complex – Durango, Juvenile Probation Administration Building, room 223.

More events on Page 4

Integrated Family Court tests ways to better serve families

A little over a year ago, Superior Court in Maricopa County initiated a pilot project to find a more effective way of resolving multiple cases pending in the court that involve the members of one family.

The project - Integrated Family Court - can coordinate the resolution of cases pending in family, juvenile and probate court and perhaps other Superior Court departments. The most unique aspect of the Integrated Family Court is that all family conflicts and problems are consolidated within one court department.

It is not uncommon for a couple involved in a child custody dispute as part of a divorce action to also be involved in separate court proceedings involving an

By Stephanie Culberson

A benefit judges may experience is an enhanced ability to better manage and resolve pending cases involving the whole family.

allegation of child abuse or neglect. The same family appearing in two or more courts creates difficulties of logistics and coordination, as well as emotional trauma and unnecessary expense.

Numerous court appearances may be required, and different judges may need to become familiar with the family's background.

Social service personnel associated with the different courts may perform duplica-

tive functions, such as multiple interviews of children.

Integrated Family Court is expected to have advantages over the traditional way of resolving diverse cases involving one family.

Anticipated benefits include the reduction of duplicative court services and better communication and sharing of information among court departments and agencies that deal with children and such family issues as domestic violence.

It is believed the court is also provided with more information upon which to make family-related decisions.

A benefit judges may experience is an enhanced ability to better manage and

Continued Page 2

Q&A from Judge Linda Scott

Presiding Juvenile Court Judge

Q Rule 22 of the Arizona Rules of Court allows a volunteer special advocate to act as a Guardian Ad Litem (GAL). Why does the attorney Guardian Ad Litem remain assigned to the case if a CASA is assigned?

The GAL typically has very limited contact with the children, and often relies on the Case Manager and the CASA for information. Wouldn't it be a better use of resources to not assign a CASA and a GAL to the same case?

A A CASA does make many contacts with the child, caregivers, parents and other people involved in a child's life and is in a unique position to provide information and recommendations to the Court. Lawyer GALs generally do not maintain this high level of contact. In fact, sometimes they rely on reports from the CASA or caseworker for most of their information.

Therefore, I understand



why you ask if this is a good use of resources to have a GAL on a case that has a CASA. However, the Supreme Court has made it clear that a nonlawyer GAL or CASA cannot legally represent a child in a court and therefore cannot file motions on behalf of the child or file objections to motions of other parties in the case. Therefore, it was decided by previous presiding judges that a child should have a lawyer GAL to provide this legal representation. I continue to support this position, although I would welcome dialogue to discuss this issue.

Local, national CASA children benefit from fraternity's generosity

Rita Flores CASA Coordinator

One of the most supportive organizations to provide donations to the Court Appointed Special Advocate program is Kappa Alpha Theta. Their work enhances the lives of CASA children.

In Maricopa County, the Thetas are quite involved with our CASA program. Annually, they provide a picnic for CASA children including a carnival with prizes and treats. They also donate backpacks filled with school supplies for back-to-school needs. We feel very fortunate that our CASA children benefit from the generous contributions made from the Thetas.

Nationally, Kappa Alpha Theta has designated the CASA program among the

recipients of its philanthropic efforts. The National CASA Association utilizes a Kappa Alpha Theta Foundation grant to support its toll-free phone number, educational materials and displays for volunteers. Funding also provides for the annual Kappa Alpha Theta Program Director of the Year. The women's organization also helps raise money for CASA programs across the nation to help fund such things as office support and toys and other items for CASA children. Funds can be used to host local events for CASA children. And Theta members become CASA volunteers themselves.

Kappa Alpha Theta is the first Greek-letter fraternity for women and was founded in 1870. At the time, colleges had just begun to open their doors to women, with some opposition from the male students. Organizing into a

provides growth and leadership opportunities for young women and promotes excellence. Theta members have excelled as students and have gone on to achieve prominence in every professional field - from medicine to

literature to politics. Some famous Thetas include Laura Bush, Lynne Cheney, Sheryl Crow, Amy Grant, Ann Margaret, Kerri Strug, and Marlo Thomas. The

Aid to CASA - Part II

A continuing series highlighting the organizations that support the CASA Program

society allowed the women students to make friends, and find support and encouragement in their academic pursuits. Today, Kappa Alpha Theta has 123 chapters at colleges and universities across the United States and Canada. There are more than 170,000 members. Theta

Kappa Alpha Theta Foundation supports college women through financial assistance, contemporary programming in alcohol abuse prevention, leadership development training and more. The foundation awarded almost \$1.1 million in grants last year.

Help sought for recruitment effort

You are invited to participate in our Fall Recruitment Drive. Our goal is to collect copies local newspapers, community newsletters, church bulletins and organizations' newsletters. After we obtain these publications, we will ask that they help promote the CASA name and raise awareness of the CASA Program.

If your subdivision has a local newspaper, send it in! If your church has a weekly bulletin or newsletter, forward a copy to us! If you are involved in an organization that would be willing to give CASA some space in their newsletter, let us know by sending us a copy! As you walk through supermarkets, stores and businesses, and see newsletters or

magazines that you think may be appropriate for a CASA ad, pick one up and send it in!

Be part of the great "Paper Drive" to promote CASA around the Valley in the coming months. Help us spread the word!

Send to: LaDonna Moss, CASA Program, Juvenile Court - Durango, 3125 W. Durango St., Suite 130, Phoenix AZ 85009.



Family, From Page 1

resolve pending cases involving the whole family. It may prove also to be a more economical way to resolve cases for the family and the court.

Most importantly, the pilot program may be a way to provide better service to families and children.

More than 50 cases have been assigned to the Integrated Family Court. The majority of cases are still active.

Superior Court Associate Presiding Judge Mark Armstrong, two juvenile court judges, two family court judges and one special assignment judge are handling Integrated Family Court

cases.

As a CASA, you may be assigned to a child whose family has multiple pending court matters. In this case, Integrated Family Court may be of some assistance to you in your advocacy role since you will have exposure to the full range of the family's issues.

If a case to which you are assigned is included in the Integrated Family Court, the court will notify you. The Integrated Family Court pilot project will be evaluated at the end of November to determine its effectiveness in helping the families whose cases have been included.

Get to know Barbara Karim

Barbara Karim has been a volunteer with the Maricopa County CASA Program for over two years. She owns a group home and also a restaurant, and is active on the CASA Speaker's Bureau.

What happened two years ago that sparked your decision to become a CASA?

After meeting a CASA who was visiting a child in the group home I run, I was so impressed by the volunteer that I inquired how I could become a CASA.

What keeps you interested and motivated to be a CASA?

Knowing that what I do makes a difference.

How has your work with a group home influenced your work as a CASA?

It has made me so conscientious as to what the children need. I get to see them every day. I know what they go through. It has also made me more aware of the importance of documentation and how thorough I need to be. Once I had received a group of children in the group home whose medical records had been lost. The children were going to be starting school soon, so school administrators needed to know if they had received the necessary vaccinations. Without the documentation, the children had to go for vaccinations again, even though they may have already received them. By running a group home, one

sees what a heavy load Child Protective Services workers carry. I understand how important it is for all parties to work as a team.

What principles in working in a group home have helped you as a CASA?

Follow-through is very important as is keeping track of all of the aspects of the case so that nothing gets missed.

What business principles of running a restaurant can be used for dealing with children's problems and needs?

When you own a restaurant, you have the concern of the people. You must treat your employees fair and have an open relationship with customers. You want to be sure that no one gets sick so following the proper procedures and making sure that all team members communicate is important. That's what I really take from it...that it takes everybody to make a case work. Teamwork is very important.

With a schedule like yours, and with the responsibilities you have, how do you manage your time to work on your CASA caseload?

I see the needs of the children, and I just make it work.

What do you enjoy about the CASA Speakers Bureau?

I like to share my experiences. I know CASAs make a difference, and I want to promote that.



CASA Barbara Karim in a booth at the recent Arizona Black Expo.

You have an admirable reputation as a great recruiter. If you can describe one technique you use that always perks up someone's interest in the program, what is that technique?

I tell them that children need a voice, and they can't speak for themselves. That seems to pique people's interest.

What do you suggest for other CASAs to do to increase the number of CASA volunteers?

Every chance you get, talk about it.

Do you have a motto or philosophy that defines your goals and efforts as a CASA?

Never give up. There's always hope."

What is the most challenging aspect of being a CASA?

The emotional attachment, trying to stay

objective and set boundaries.

What is the most rewarding aspect?

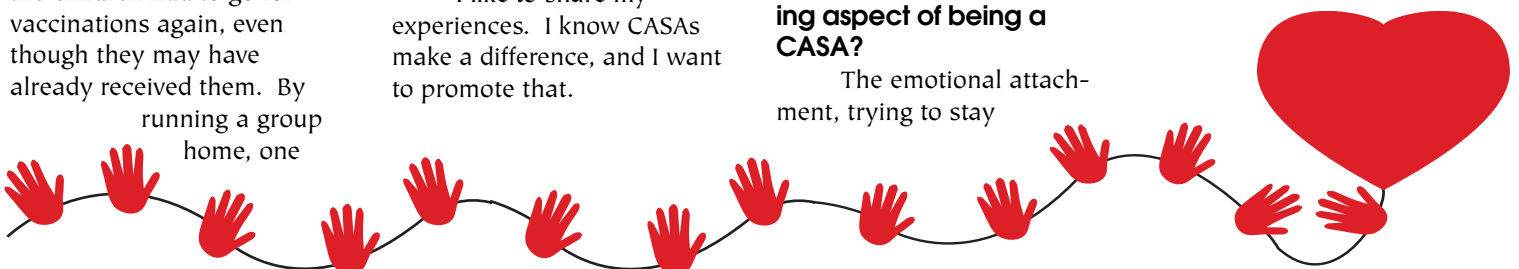
To have input that is beneficial to the child you represent and to have a voice that is heard. It is really rewarding to know that the judges do listen and that they do value my opinion.

Who was the biggest influence on you as a child?

A librarian named Mrs. Thelma Buchanan mentored me from the 4th grade until I was 26. She was an inspiration. And my mother who was a community worker.

What do you provide to your CASA kids that you hope will leave a lifelong positive influence on them?

Love and compassion.



FYI, more events

New number

• The FCRB has acquired a toll-free telephone number that can be used by CASAs and Interested Parties in cases so they can participate by telephone in an FCRB hearing they are unable to attend in person. The number went into effect in July. Beginning in November, this number will be included on

notices that FCRB sends out. Keep the number handy for when you may need to use it. It is: **1.866.320.1959**

More Events, From Page 1

October 24, 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Case Selection meeting
Juvenile Court Complex –
Durango, Juvenile Probation
Administration Building
Room 223.

November 16

Celebrate Adoption

Volunteers needed
Superior Court, Central Court
Building, 201 W. Jefferson,
Phoenix.

Important Upcoming Dates

Save These Dates!!

Oct. 19, 2002, 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. — Maricopa CASA
Annual Day of Training

Get 6 hours toward your
required 12 hours of training
in one day!

Nov. 2, 2002 — CASA/Theta
Picnic for CASAs and CASA
Kids

Dec. 7, 2002 — Maricopa
CASA Holiday Gathering

Watch for further details!

CASA Kudos

From the Foster Care Review Board:

The Foster Care Review Board commended the following CASAs for their continued dedication to the children on their cases:

- Gregory Broberg
- Brenda Cox
- Anne Donahoe
- Mary Lou Davis
- Pam Frye
- Charlie Johnson
- Leslie Jones
- Laurie Laughlin
- Kenneth Luffey
- Lawrence Offenberger
- Joseph Smith
- Florette Smithiger
- Michelle Wright

“for the time, effort and energy she has given to the children. As an advocate for the children, their voice in the Court, the CASA has demonstrated that one person can make a significant difference in many people’s lives.”

Pat Cohen and the CPS case manager are commended “for their thorough involvement in the child’s life and ensuring that the child’s needs are met. The Board believes that child’s life will be able to turn around with the CASA and CPS case manager’s assistance.”

From Court and Staff:

CASA **Ellen Altman** was

commended in open court by Judge Silvia Arellano who noted: “The court very much thanks the CASA for her continuing involvement and reports to the court.”

Judge Alan Kamin thanked **Shirley Polk**, as the dependency was dismissed as a result of a successful family reunification, for her hard work and effort in working with the family.

From CPS:

Case Manager for **Lynda Jo Taylor**’s case stated, “The assigned CASA continues to be actively involved in the child’s life. She should be

commended for her continued dedication to the child and his siblings.”

Congratulations:

Kathryn Gill for receiving a \$500 donation to ACCI Inc. from her employer for her community service.

From a group home director:

“I want to commend the CASA, **Karen Jensen**. She has gone far beyond what I have seen any CASA ever do.” She was then praised for taking the boys to the reservation and making a difference in their lives by getting them together for outings.

Barbara Bean is commended

Happy Birthday CASAs

September

Carolyn Atwater, Marie Ballerino, Richard Brandes, Catherine Brooks, Robert Brunson, Amanda Davisson, Anne Donahoe, Cheryl Evans, Pam Frye, Don Groth, Margaret Leach, Sarah McGerty, Rita Myrann, Mel O’Donnell, Theresa O’Connor, Vicky Orlando, Marshall Porter, Marcia Rysdon, Bette Saks, Valerie Sheedy, Timna Sitzes, Pam Valdez, Tonia Vickery.

October

Angela Ashley, Cathy Bray, Ralph Corson, Gilda Czerwonka, MaryLou Davis, Monica Eggen, Karin Fedo, Jerome Goldstine, Bill Hart, Karen Jensen, Kathie LaFevers, Jill Lindstrom, Kaye McCarthy, Linda Nokes, Lori Ohmart, Judith Peirce, Mark Salem, Rochelle Stern, Mary Wallace, Barney Woldson, Monika Woolsey.

Belated

July

Robertra Andrade, Kara Ashcraft, Gretchen Black, Deborah Egan, Lynne Elvins, Judy Flanagan, Kathleen Froggart, Nicole Hsu, Anne Stehr, Randine Hoefer, Lou Jones, Alicia Juarez, Nancy Kindregan, Harriette Lubow, Amy McDonald, Lynda Pederson, Janet Waldron,

Linda Warfield.

August

Lynn Baker, Angela Barriga, Jeshiva Clark, Pat Cohen, Larry Comeau, Lauri Daley, Jean Davis, Frances Dishmon, Jan Engdahl, Alison Ewing, Barbara Franklin, Larry Hess, Karen Lodoen, Christine Mansperger, Nancy Nelson, Larry Offenberger, Bill Pitman, Lori Sipple, Ellen Smith, Donna Spence, Mary Ann Stringer.

Coordinator's Corner

By Bonnie Marcus



Frustrating. Disappointing. Slow moving. Humbling.

These are a few words I've heard recently in listening to CASAs talk about their experiences. As you were told when you first walked through the doors of the CASA office, the cases that you accept as CASAs will test every emotion you have.

You may feel anger and despair, your self-esteem may take hits that it never had to endure before and you may wonder why you ever agreed to do this job!

You may doubt if you have an impact on your child's case, and you may question if what you do really does make a difference to the child or children.

Let me assure you. It does.

I think that sometimes we can become too focused on the ultimate goal of the best

interests of the children - and the outcome of the case. When we do this, we can miss the very real and tangible successes that we encounter along the way. Perhaps we, in the CASA office, inadvertently get into highlighting major successes in cases, and don't acknowledge often enough the small victories that you achieve almost every day.

"I finally got a hug from my CASA child!" one CASA excitedly exclaimed recently to a CASA Coordinator. This CASA is working with a teenage boy, and having a

difficult time. But the CASA persevered, was consistent in his visits and involvement with the child and proved to the child that he cared and would always be there for him.

This CASA's reward was that first display of affection and thanks by the young man. It perhaps looks like a small success. But in this case, it was a major victory.

Another CASA works with a girl who is constantly on runaway status. The CASA has been very involved with this young girl throughout the five years of this case.

An AWOL status certainly cannot be seen as a success. But, it is this CASA that the child turns to when she finally calls someone - for help, to be picked up, or to let someone know that she is all right.

Is this a case victory? No. But it is a small success for this child. She has someone she can trust.

CASAs make a difference in many ways. It is not possible for me to mention them

all here.

Successes in a case can be varied. Children, who would not have tutoring, get this needed educational boost because of a CASA.

Children, who would not see their siblings if not for the efforts of the CASA, get to participate in family get-togethers. CASAs who research placements and services bring success to a case.

Take a look at your case and see the impact you make. Don't expect grandiose results. Don't expect too much of yourself.

Your presence and involvement make the difference.

Your commitment to seeing that these children are cared for - and cared for properly - is your success. For the major victories, and they do happen, a round of applause.

For the on-going quiet successes, we give you our continued heartfelt thanks.

Thanks to our peer group hosts

A wonderful group of generous CASA volunteers has graciously opened their homes for monthly meetings to facilitate additional support and educational opportunities.

Thank you Greg Broberg, MaryLou Davis, Peiggi Clements, Marcia Rysdon, Donna Spence and Doreen Sweiss! These big-hearted folks have gone the extra mile and invited a variety of guest speakers, which seems to be a big hit with those attending. Past topics included Annette Hill presenting on LifeBooks, a program that creates a therapeutic, visual tool for a

foster child to have positive memories from childhood, and Sandi Miller from Good Fit, a counseling service designed to provide mental health care for the youngest children in foster care, beginning with infancy. Sandi spoke in Tempe and is scheduled for an October Peer Group.

In August, Jennie Lagunas with CPS spoke on guardianship subsidies that are available and how to access money for families caring for our foster children. We hope to have a speaker from Parents Anonymous next month!

So, if you are interested in attending one of the six

Peer Group Meetings

Scottsdale - 1:30 p.m., last Wednesday of every month, home of MaryLou Davis.

East Valley - 6:30 p.m.- 8 p.m., third Thursday of every month, Hosted by Greg Broberg.

Central Phoenix - 6:30 p.m., third Wednesday of every other month, at the homes of alternating hosts Marcia Rysdon and

Doreen Sweiss.

Phoenix - 6:30 p.m., second Saturday of every month at home of Peiggi Clements

West Valley - 6:30 p.m., fourth Thursday of every month, at the home of Donna Spence.

Please call the main CASA office - 602.506.4083 - for peer group host phone numbers.

Peer Groups available, call your coordinator! Remember, it is another opportunity to meet your annual 12 hours training requirement!

More importantly, it is a venue to reconnect with other volunteers as well as further develop your advocacy skills!

CASA Contacts and Information

Locations

Program Staff

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Rita Flores	602.506.3935
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